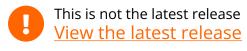


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## Labour Force, Australia

Headline estimates of employment, unemployment, underemployment, participation and hours worked from the monthly Labour Force Survey

Reference period February 2020

Released 19/03/2020

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## **Key statistics**

- Unemployment rate remained at 5.1%.
- Participation rate remained at 66.0%.
- Employment increased 21,100 to 13,010,200 people.
- Employment to population ratio remained at 62.6%.
- Underemployment rate remained at 8.6%.
- Monthly hours worked decreased 1 million hours to 1,779 million hours.

# Managing the impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19) on labour force statistics

The ABS is currently monitoring for potential impacts from the Coronavirus (COVID-19) on Labour Force statistics and will continue to do so for the period of the pandemic.

Quality assurance of data for February did not identify any notable impact to headline statistics. It is important to note that the reference weeks for February fell in the first half of the month, at a point where there was only a relatively low number of confirmed COVID-19 cases within Australia and before it was declared a global pandemic.

As with other major disruption to the economy, early impacts are usually most evident in the Monthly hours worked in all jobs series (Table 19). Additional information, such as the reason people worked fewer hours than usual, is available within Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery, due for release on 26 March.

The ABS intends to profile some of the information on the reason people worked fewer hours than usual, which can be found in pivot tables EM2a and EM2b, on 26 March. The ABS will include additional advice in that summary, noting that some caution needs to be exercised when using original data at more disaggregated levels, as they are subject to larger sampling variability and seasonal patterns.

The ABS will also be actively managing the potential risks from COVID-19 to data collection operations. Around 90% of responses to the Labour Force Survey are provided through telephone interviews or online, leaving around 10% involving face-to-face interviews. Respondents in the survey may note changes in how the ABS contacts or approaches them over the coming months, and acknowledges the tremendous support that the Australia community is continuing to provide in supporting high quality and critically important Labour Force statistics.

On 18 March, the ABS also released some interactive employment maps (https://absstats.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=9a79d680ea33450698cd9a50a3da21d1) based on the most recent data from Jobs in Australia, which is based on summary administrative data, to support a regional assessment of potential impacts of COVID-19 on employment.

Managing the impact of the bushfires on labour force statistics

Bushfires resulted in disruption to ABS data collection operations in some regions in New South Wales and Victoria during January 2020. A few areas in New South Wales, particularly within the 'Capital Region', were also unable to be surveyed in February 2020. These areas amounted to around half the sample which was unable to be surveyed in January 2020 in the state.

As with January data, the ABS confirmed that the disruption from the bushfires did not have a notable impact on key headline statistics and that no additional statistical interventions were required.

Region level data for the New South Wales regions of the 'Capital Region', 'Southern Highlands and Shoalhaven' and 'Mid North Coast' for January 2020 will not be published in the February 2020 Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery. February 2020 estimates for the 'Capital Region' will also not be published.

The ABS expects to resume publishing these estimates with the release of March 2020 data. January 2020 data for 'Latrobe - Gippsland', in Victoria, will be available with the February release.

# Managing the impact of the Townsville floods in February 2019

Flooding in Townsville in February 2019 resulted in a major disruption to the operation of the Labour Force Survey. Given the severity of these disruptions, which affected almost the entire region, and to ensure that this loss of sample did not affect data for Australia and Queensland, the ABS imputed sample for Townsville for February 2019. The imputation drew upon previous information that had recently been collected from people in Townsville.

The ABS re-assessed this imputation and has not revised the imputed data. However, users of the Townsville data, and totals for 'Rest of Queensland' data, should still exercise some extra caution when looking at yearly and monthly movements in February 2020.

	Jan 20	Feb 20	Monthly change	Yearly change
Trend				
Employed people	12,989,000	13,010,200	21,100	1.9%
Unemployed people	e 700,200	698,900	-1,300	3.0%
Unemployment rate	e 5.1%	5.1%	0.0 pts	0.0 pts
Underemployment rate	e 8.6%	8.6%	0.0 pts	0.3 pts
Participation rate	e 66.0%	66.0%	0.0 pts	0.3 pts

		Jan 20	Feb	Monthly	Yearly
			20	change	change
	Monthly hours worked in all jobs	,780 million	1,779 million	-1 million	0.8%
Seasonally					
adjusted					
	Employed people	12,988,400	13,015,100	26,700	2.0%
	Unemployed people	725,500	699,100	-26,400	5.0%
	Unemployment rate	5.3%	5.1%	-0.2 pts	0.1 pts
	Underemployment rate	8.6%	8.6%	0.0 pts	0.6 pts
	Participation rate	66.1%	66.0%	-0.1 pts	0.4 pts
	Monthly hours worked in all jobs	,778 million	1,775 million	-3 million	0.5%

All data are trend unless otherwise stated. The trend series smooths the more volatile seasonally adjusted estimates and provides the best measure of the underlying behaviour of the labour market.

Estimates of changes are calculated using un-rounded level estimates, and may be different from, but are more accurate than, movements obtained from the rounded level estimates.

## Unemployment

In February 2020:

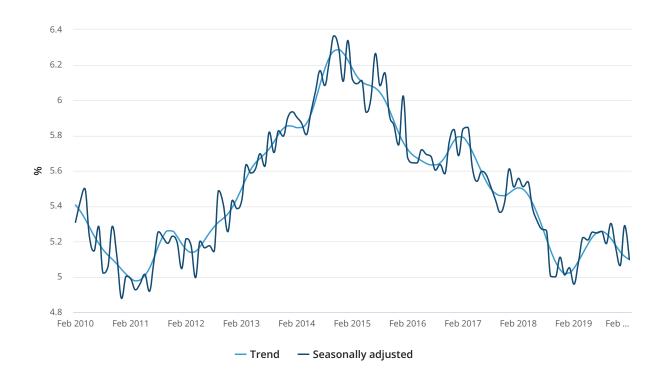
- the unemployment rate remained steady at 5.1% (the same level as a year ago)
- unemployed people decreased by 1,300 to 698,900 (and increased by 20,000 over the year to February 2020)
- the youth unemployment rate (i.e. for those aged 15-24) increased by 0.1 pts to 12.0% (and increased 0.5 pts over the year to February 2020)

In seasonally adjusted terms, in February 2020:

- the unemployment rate decreased by 0.2 pts to 5.1% (and increased by 0.1 pts over the year to February 2020)
- unemployed people decreased by 26,400 to 699,100 (and increased by 33,500 over the year to February 2020)

• the youth unemployment rate increased by less than 0.1 pts to 12.2% (and increased 1.1 pts over the year to February 2020)

#### Unemployment rate



## **Employment**

In February 2020:

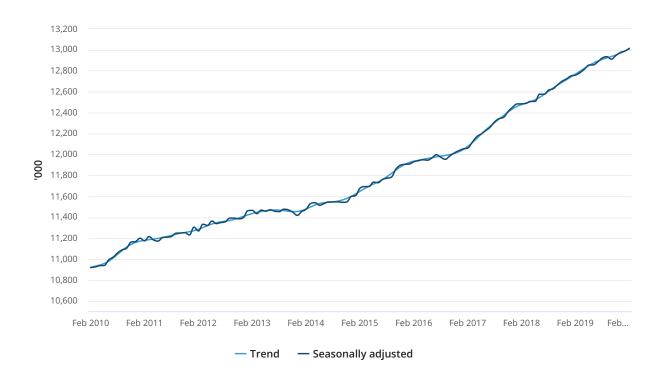
- employment increased by 0.16% or 21,100 people to 13,010,200, which was the same as the 20 year average monthly growth rate
- over the year to February 2020, employment increased by 1.9% or 241,300 people, which was lower than the 20 year annual average growth rate of 2.0%

In seasonally adjusted terms, in February 2020:

- employment increased by 26,700 to 13,015,100 people
- over the year to February 2020, employment increased by 2.0% or 256,300 people

Underpinning these net changes in employment is extensive change which occurs in the labour market. In recent months there has generally been considerably more than 300,000 people entering employment, and more than 300,000 leaving employment each month. There are also changes in the hours that people work, which can have an impact on the full-time and part-time composition of employment.

#### **Employed persons**



#### Full-time and part-time employment

In February 2020:

- full-time employment increased by 13,300 to 8,885,600 people, and part-time employment increased 7,800 to 4,124,500 people
- over the year to February 2020, full-time employment increased by 132,500 people and part-time employment increased by 108,800 people

This has led to an increase in the part-time share of employment from 31.4% to 31.7% over the year to February 2020.

In seasonally adjusted terms, in February 2020:

- full-time employment increased 6,700 to 8,884,600, and part-time employment increased 20,000 to 4,130,600
- over the year to February 2020, full-time employment increased by 144,300 people and part-time employment increased by 111,900 people

#### **Employment to population ratio**

In February 2020:

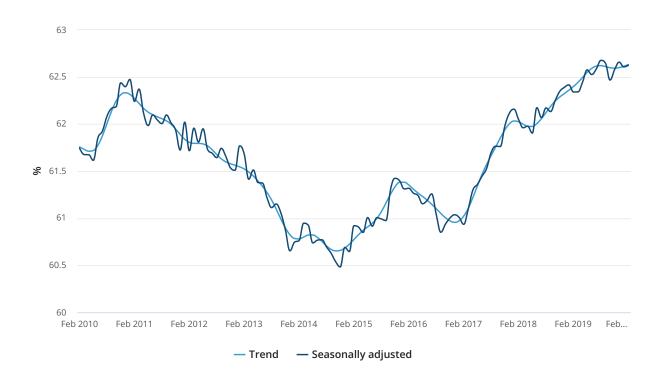
• the employment to population ratio remained steady at 62.6%, and increased 0.2 pts from the same time last year

In seasonally adjusted terms, in February 2020:

• the employment to population ratio remained steady at 62.6%, and increased by 0.3 pts from the same time last year

The employment to population ratio provides a measure of the change in employment relative to changes in the size of the population.

#### Employment to population ratio



#### Hours worked

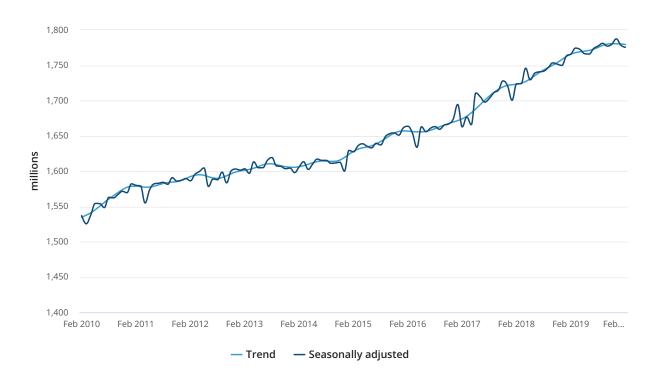
In February 2020, monthly hours worked in all jobs:

- decreased by 1 million hours (0.0%) to 1,779 million hours
- increased by 0.8% over the year, which is below the 1.9% increase in employed people

In seasonally adjusted terms, in February 2020, monthly hours worked in all jobs:

- decreased by 3 million hours (0.2%) to 1,775 million hours
- increased by 0.5% over the year, which is below the 2.0% increase in employed people

#### Monthly hours worked in all jobs



## **Participation**

In February 2020, the participation rate:

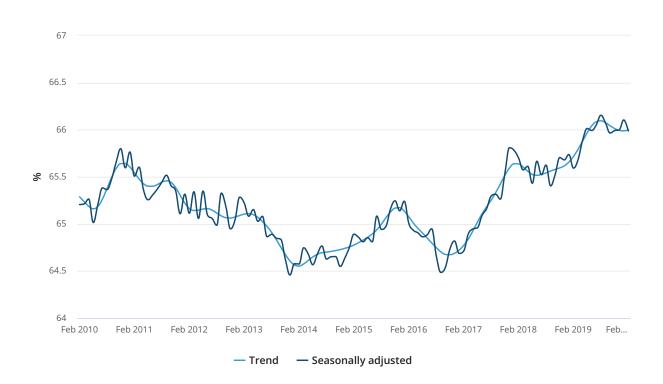
- remained steady at 66.0%, and increased 0.3 pts over the year to February 2020
- remained steady for both men (70.8%) and women (61.3%)
- increased by less than 0.1 pts to 78.8% for 15 to 64 year olds (the working age population). For 15 to 64 year old men, it was 83.2% and for 15 to 64 year old it was women 74.4%
- increased 0.1 pts to 68.6% for 15 to 24 year olds

In seasonally adjusted terms, in February 2020, the participation rate:

- decreased 0.1 pts to 66.0%, and increased 0.4 pts over the year to February 2020
- remained steady for men (70.8%) and decreased by 0.2 pts for women (61.3%)

- decreased by 0.2 pts to 78.7% for 15 to 64 year olds (the working age population). For 15 to 64 year old men, it was 83.1% and for 15 to 64 year old women it was 74.4%
- decreased 0.2 pts to 68.5% for 15 to 24 year olds

#### Participation rate



## Underemployment and underutilisation

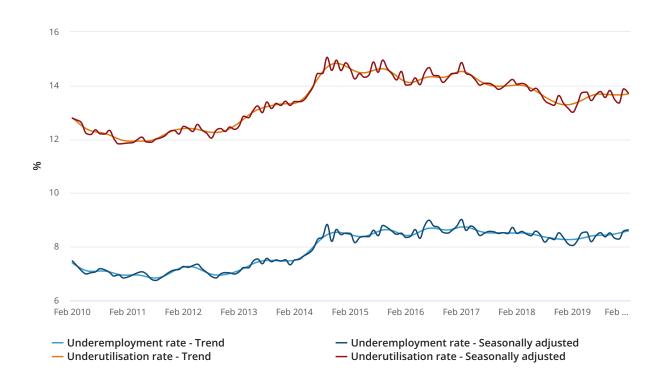
In February 2020:

- the underemployment rate remained steady at 8.6%
- the underutilisation rate remained steady at 13.7%

In seasonally adjusted terms, in February 2020:

- the underemployment rate remained steady at 8.6%
- the underutilisation rate decreased 0.2 pts to 13.7%

## Underemployment rate and underutilisation rate



## States and territories

#### Trend estimates

	New South Wales	Victoria	Queensland	South Australia	Western Australia	Tasmania	Northern Territory
Employed persons	4,137,500	3,448,100	2,565,900	849,000	1,368,900	258,700	133,200
Employed persons - monthly change	0.1%	0.1%	0.3%	0.0%	0.2%	0.5%	0.2%
Employment to population ratio	62.4%	63.1%	62.1%	58.7%	64.5%	58.3%	71.2%
Employment to population ratio - monthly change	0.0 pts	-0.1 pts	0.1 pts	0.0 pts	0.1 pts	0.2 pts	0.2 pts
Unemployment rate	4.5%	5.2%	5.7%	5.8%	5.4%	5.5%	5.5%
Unemployment rate - monthly change	0.0 pts	0.1 pts	-0.1 pts	-0.1 pts	0.0 pts	-0.1 pts	0.0 pts
Underemployment rate	8.4%	8.3%	8.7%	9.8%	8.8%	11.2%	6.1%

	New South Wales	Victoria	Queensland	South Australia	Western Australia	Tasmania	Northern Territory	Αι
Underemployment rate - monthly change	0.1 pts	0.0 pts	0.1 pts	0.1 pts	-0.1 pts	0.1 pts	0.3 pts	
Participation rate	65.3%	66.5%	65.9%	62.3%	68.2%	61.7%	75.4%	
Participation rate -	0.0 nts	0.0 pts	0.0 pts	-0.1 pts	0.0 pts	0.2 pts	0.3 pts	

## **Data downloads**

#### Labour force status

Table 1. Labour force status by Sex, Australia - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

**<u>▶</u>** Download XLS

[<u>1.12 MB</u>]

Table 4. Labour force status by Sex, New South Wales - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

**<u>▶</u>** Download XLS

[868 KB]

Table 5. Labour force status by Sex, Victoria - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

**▶ Download** XLS

[881.5 KB]

Table 6. Labour force status by Sex, Queensland - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

**<u> ▶ Download XLS</u>** 

[900 KB]

Table 7. Labour force status by Sex, South Australia - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

**<u> → Download XLS</u>** 

[913 KB]

Table 8. Labour force status by Sex, Western Australia - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

**<u>↓</u>** Download XLS

[910 KB]

Table 9. Labour force status by Sex, Tasmania - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

**<u> → Download XLS</u>** 

[1.09 MB]

Table 10. Labour force status by Sex, Northern Territory - Trend and Original

**<u> → Download XLS</u>** 

[1.73 MB]

Table 11. Labour force status by Sex, Australian Capital Territory - Trend and Original

**↓ Download** XLS

[1.04 MB]

Table 12. Labour force status by Sex, State and Territory - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

[8.99 MB]

Table 13. Labour force status for 15-24 year olds by Sex - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

**▶ Download** XLS

[1.11 MB]

Table 15. Labour force status for 15-24 year olds by Educational attendance (full-time) and Sex

**▶ Download** XLS

[1.55 MB]

Table 16. Labour force status for 15-24 year olds by State, Territory and Educational attendance (full-time)

**<u> ▶ Download XLS</u>** 

[8.31 MB]

Table 17. Labour force status for 15-19 year olds by Sex - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

**<u> → Download XLS</u>** 

[<u>972 KB</u>]

Table 18. Labour force status for 15-64 year olds by Sex - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

**▶ Download** XLS

[<u>1.11 MB</u>]

Hours worked

Table 19. Monthly hours worked in all jobs by Employed full-time, part-time and Sex and by State and Territory - Trend and Seasonally adjusted

[366 KB]

Table 21. Quarterly hours worked in all jobs by Market and Non-market sector - Seasonally adjusted

#### **<u> → Download XLS</u>**

[63 KB]

#### Underemployment and underutilisation

Table 22. Underutilised persons by Age and Sex - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

**↓ Download** XLS

[8.2 MB]

Table 23. Underutilised persons by State and Territory and Sex - Trend, Seasonally adjusted and Original

**↓ Download** XLS

[11.83 MB]

Table 24. Underutilised persons by Age and Sex (expanded analytical series)

**<u> → Download XLS</u>** 

[714.5 KB]

Table 25. Underutilised persons by State, Territory and Sex (expanded analytical series)

**<u> → Download XLS</u>** 

[592.5 KB]

All time series spreadsheets

All Time Series Spreadsheets

**▶** Download ZIP

[23.09 MB]

#### Flows into and out of employment

## GM1 - Labour force status and Gross changes (flows) by Age, Sex, State and Territory, February 1991 onwards

The simultaneous introduction of two rotation groups per month between May and August 2013 resulted in a lower proportion of the sample being matched during this period. In June 2013, a new sample for the more remote, less populated areas and non-private dwellings was introduced for Tasmania, Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory. The new sample for the same categories in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia was introduced in July 2013. These changes are reflected in smaller estimates in the gross flows.

**<u> → Download ZIP</u>** 

[92.03 MB]

#### Article archive

LFS content and output

ABS Labour Statistics: A broad range of information (https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0main+features7Jul%202019) (July 2019)

500th issue of 6202.0 (https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features6Jan%202018) (January 2018)

<u>Labour Force Survey pivot tables (https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6291.0.55.001Main%20Features2Aug%202017)</u> (August 2017)

Expanded education data from the Labour Force Survey (https://www.abs.gov.au/ AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6291.0.55.003Main%20Features3Aug%202016) (August 2016)

Change to Status in Employment output (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/ Previousproducts/6202.0Main%20Features5Jul%202015) (July 2015)

Forthcoming improvements to the content of the Labour Force and Labour Supplementary Surveys (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features3Jan%202013) (January 2013)

<u>Upcoming changes to the Labour Force Survey (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features2Jul%202012)</u> (July 2012)

<u>Labour Household Surveys content review (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features3Jun%202012)</u> (June 2012)

## Understanding the labour force

<u>Labour Force Explained (https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/home/labour+force+explained)</u> (September 2017)

<u>Understanding the Australian labour force using ABS statistics (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features999Dec%202013)</u> (December 2013)

<u>Understanding full-time / part-time status in the Labour Force Survey (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features4Sep%202013)</u> (September 2013)

Employment level estimates versus employment to population ratio explained (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features2Jan%202012) (January 2012)

### **Employment and jobs**

How many people work one hour a week (https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features3Jan%202019) (January 2019)

Leave entitlements (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/6291.0.55.003Main%20Features6Nov%202015) (November 2015)

<u>Duration of employment (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/6291.0.55.003Main%20Features7Nov%202015)</u> (November 2015)

<u>Sector of main job (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/6291.0.55.003Main%20Features10Nov%202015)</u> (November 2015)

Estimating jobs in the Australian labour market (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features1100Feb%202013) (February 2013)

Employment in mining in Queensland, New South Wales and Western Australia (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features2May%202012) (May 2012)

## Unemployment and underemployment

<u>Underemployment in Australia (https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0main+features10September%202018)</u> (September 2018)

<u>Spotlight on underemployment (https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features5Nov%202016)</u> (November 2016)

Meaasures of underemployment and underutilisation (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/6202.0Main%20Features5Nov%202015) (November 2015)

Full-time and part-time job search (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/ Previousproducts/6291.0.55.001Main%20Features6Nov%202015) (November 2015)

Hours-based measures of unemployment and underemployment (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/6291.0.55.003Main%20Features8Nov%202015) (November 2015)

Retrenchment (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/6291.0.55.003Main%20Features9Nov%202015) (November 2015)

<u>Did you know - Underemployment (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features4Jun%202013)</u> (June 2013)

Exploring labour force data on joblessness (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features2Feb%202012) (February 2012)

#### Hours worked

Revisions to monthly hours worked in all jobs (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features5Jul%202016) (July 2016)

### Regional estimates

Advice on reporting regional labour force data (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6291.0.55.001Main%20Features4Dec%202017) (December 2017)

<u>Analysis of changes to Labour Force regional estimates (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6291.0.55.003Main%20Features2Feb%202014)</u> (February 2014)

### Methodology

Improvement to the trending method for Labour Force rates and ratios (https://www.abs.gov.au/Ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features5Oct%202019) (October 2019)

Assessing volatility in Labour Force statistics (https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0main+features6Jul%202019) (July 2019)

On-line collection in the Labour Force Survey (https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0main+features10Apr%202019) (April 2019)

Annual seasonal re-analysis (https://www.abs.gov.au/Ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features5Mar%202019) (March 2019)

<u>Improvements to trend estimation (https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features7Mar%202018)</u> (March 2018)

<u>Major re-benchmarking of Labour Force series (https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0.55.003Main%20Features2October%202017)</u> (October 2017)

<u>Changes to filter lengths used in labour statistics (https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features6Feb%202017)</u> (February 2017)

<u>Update on recommendation 7 from the independent technical review (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/</u>

6202.0Main%20Features4Nov%202015) (November 2015)

Progress with recommendations from the independent technical review (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/6202.0Main%20Features4Jul%202015) (July 2015)

<u>Update on recommendations 10 and 11 from the independent technical review (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/6202.0Main%20Features4Jun%202015)</u> (June 2015)

<u>Update on recommendation 7 from the independent technical review (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features4May%202015)</u> (May 2015)

<u>Update on recommendations from the independent technical review (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features5Mar%202015)</u>
(March 2015)

Rebenchmarking Labour Force estimates (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features4Feb%202015) (February 2015)

Independent technical review into the Labour Force Survey (https://www.abs.gov.au/ AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features4Nov%202014) (November 2014)

Removing the effect of supplementary surveys from seasonally adjusted estimates (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features4Oct%202014) (October 2014)

Rebenchmarking Labour Force estimates to the 2011 Census (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features3Jan%202014) (January 2014)

New Labour Force sample design (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features5May%202013) (May 2013)

<u>Transition to online collection of the Labour Force survey (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features4Apr%202013)</u> (April 2013)

Rebenchmarking of Labour Force series (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features2Nov%202012) (November 2012)

<u>Population benchmarks and Labour Force Survey (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features2Apr%202012)</u> (April 2012)

<u>Historical revisions (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/</u>

6202.0Main%20Features2Feb%202011) (February 2011)

Impact of the floods on the Labour Force Survey (https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/6202.0Main%20Features2Jan%202011) (January 2011)

## Methodology

<u>Labour Force, Australia methodology, February 2020</u>